

Public camps at US high court for health hearing

March 24 2012

A dozen people camped out in front of the US Supreme Court overnight into Saturday to make sure they would get a first glimpse of a historic hearing into the president's health reform law next week.

About 50 seats have been reserved for the public in the courtroom to hear the Supreme Court's [oral arguments](#) in the case.

Interested citizens usually form a line in front of the building one or two hours before the hearing, but this time the stakes are so high that some chose to stake out a spot two days in advance.

The Affordable Care Act, passed after a bitter struggle against blanket Republican opposition in 2010, granted 30 million Americans [health](#) insurance for the first time, bringing universal coverage closer than ever before.

"It's health care for everybody. It's very important," said Jasper Johnson, a 26-year-old computer technician who came from San Francisco to watch the start of the proceedings on Monday.

"A lot of people don't get health care. I'm here not only for myself but for the economy as a whole."

He joined others in setting his sleeping bag and camping chair outside the monumental neo-classical Supreme Court building to wait for the hearing due to end Wednesday.

"I hope it's a successful deliberation. I hope it's implemented," said Johnson, who arrived on Friday. "I wish there would be more people; I'm here so my voice will be heard."

Conservatives bash "Obamacare" as an assault on economic liberties that would saddle Americans with unprecedented [financial burden](#).

But President [Barack Obama](#), a Democrat, marked the first anniversary of his signature legislative achievement Friday by saying the law allowed 2.5 million additional young adults to stay on their parents' health plan and helped five million seniors save an average of \$635 on prescription drug costs.

Kathie McClure came from Atlanta to attend the court proceedings. She said her two children suffer from diabetes and epilepsy, which insurance companies consider preexisting conditions that are not covered under their programs.

"They are in deep trouble," she told AFP. "If the [Affordable Care](#) Act or the so-called Obamacare is not upheld, they would have a lifetime of worry... We have a dog in the fight."

Some of the people camped in front of the court were paid by a firm or group to keep a spot for someone else.

"They're paying a lot of money to get a good seat," said Daniel Cruz, 42. He will not attend the [hearing](#) but is keeping a spot until Wednesday.

(c) 2012 AFP

Citation: Public camps at US high court for health hearing (2012, March 24) retrieved 17 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-03-high-court-health.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.